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Governor signs proclamation declaring January Mentoring Month *Kansans encouraged to join in the festivities by signing up to mentor*

Governor Mark Parkinson signed a proclamation today declaring January Kansas Mentoring Month to recognize the importance of mentoring and to encourage more Kansans to serve as mentors in their communities.

Mentoring matches from several Kansas programs were in attendance including representatives from Compeer of Topeka, Kansas Big Brothers Big Sisters, YouthFriends and Kansas Mentors, the state's mentoring partnership.

"I encourage all Kansans to learn more about mentoring," said Coach Snyder, co-chair of Kansas Mentors. "Whether it is an hour over your lunch or one evening once a week, serving as a caring role model to a young person will likely be one of the most rewarding and worthwhile investments you will make."

Research shows that mentoring has long-term benefits on youth by increasing their chances of high school graduation and college attendance and decreasing the likelihood of substance abuse and other risky behaviors.

"Ensuring the success of our youth is not only valuable to the kids, but also to our state's economy and workforce," said Ella Todd, Director of Kansas Mentors. "Mentoring is just one way to help ensure young Kansans have the tools to succeed and become productive citizens."

To learn more about mentoring and ways to get involved, visit the Kansas Mentors website at www.KansasMentors.org or call their office at (785) 296-8873.

Kansas' celebration of Mentoring Month joins a national effort spearheaded by the Harvard School of Public Health, MENTOR and the Corporation for National and Community Service. To learn more visit: www.nationalmentoringmonth.org

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